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Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony

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**Talking Points
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Ceremony
Laurel**

Bill Kennedy will introduce you

Thank you, Bill. I'm honored to be here.

Today we are missing our Pearl Harbor survivors who are no longer with us.

Especially Navy veteran Ed Chlapowski [Chul-pow-ski] who worked so hard to keep Pearl Harbor survivors and their family members connected.

It's great to see Ed's daughter, Sue Gillespie. Sue is living proof that when duty calls for our military men and women, it also calls on their families.

Every December 7th, we're called to honor the great service and sacrifice of our nation's greatest generation.

It was a day that Americans united in grief became resolved to fight oppression.

As we stand here 72 years later we're called to ask: How do we truly honor that sacrifice?

I believe the answer is in constantly looking for any and every way we can support our active duty troops and their families.

One example is a program called Grateful Nation Montana.

It's designed to give the children of our troops killed in Iraq and Afghanistan a college education.

That's one way to say thank you.

Another way to show we care: supporting Big Sky Honor Flight to ensure the hundreds of Montanans still waiting will get to visit the nation's capital to see firsthand the World War II Memorial in their honor.

Being a Grateful Nation is making sure we never forget.

My hometown, Helena, was home to the first ever Special Operations Force – a top secret combat unit created during World War II. They were called the Devil's Brigade.

Right now, Senator Tester and I are working to pass legislation to give the Devil's Brigade the Congressional Gold Medal.

It's the highest honor Congress can bestow.

As we honor our war heroes of the past, we can show our gratitude by making sure current service members and veterans of all eras have the health care they deserve and have earned.

The Senate just passed the National Defense Authorization Act this week.

Senator Tester and I secured an amendment to the bill to provide better mental health support for veterans and their families.

I also secured legislation to give employers a tax break for honoring veterans by hiring them.

There's much more work to be done. I look forward to working together with you on ways we can elevate our country to be the Grateful Nation that our fallen Pearl Harbor heroes would be proud of.